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MODERN
PHILANTHROPY
ILLUSTRATED.

HOW THEY TRIED TO MAKE A WHITE MAN
OF A NEGRO TWENTY-FIVE HUN-
DRED YEARS AGO.

WILL THE EXPERIMENT SUCCEED ANY
BETTER NOW?

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MODERN PHILANTHROPY

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HOW THEY TRIED TO MAKE A WHITE MAN OF A NEGRO TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO. WILL BETTER SUCCESS ATTEND THE EXPERIMENT NOW?

THE history of the African in this age and country was—curious to note—told more than two thousand years ago, by a celebrated and remarkably pointed Greek writer; when, as he relates, certain persons—doubtless “philanthropists”—then, as now, not content with having the colored man about them as a “blackamoor,” deliberately determined upon making him *white*! The story—as Æsop tells it—was both comical and sad. They put him in a tub, began upon him with scrubbing-brushes and brooms, and, not succeeding in the endeavor to make him white, they *did* succeed in giving him a cold and sickness which caused his death.

And although the world at large, and our own people in particular, cannot but be conversant with this most remarkable case; although it has the indubitable and invaluable stamp of antiquity to recommend it; and although its wonderful fidelity *to the tenor of events at the present time* cannot be questioned, there are those to-day just as deeply engaged in scrubbing the African, with a view to making him white, as were those who experimented so long ago in vain.

And what makes the matter more marked, too, in the nature of a warning to the present manipulators of the poor African, it has come to this—that whilst they kill “him with kindness,” the experiment is just now proving *quite as fatal to themselves*.

If anybody doubts this, they have only to note the fate of that leading manipulator and philanthropist, the Chief-Justice of the

United States, out of his abounding benevolence of heart one of the busiest and most earnest scrubbers known; his fate imminently threatening any one unwise enough to follow his example. As a case in point, the fact is notorious, that General Grant has already given strong evidence of having *caught a bad cold*, whilst hardly yet more than a looker-on where the African sits in his tub.

The colored man himself, too, is, it seems, so disgusted with his skin, that, under certain conditions and circumstances, he also is content, if not eager, to change it, even at the cost of life itself! An English authority in Australia tells us that, on one occasion, a native black was to be hanged for the commission of some crime. On the way to the fatal tree, he was observed to cut sundry fantastic capers; dancing, in fact—something that so surprised the good priest at his side, that the holy man was fain to inquire what could induce him to dance under such circumstances, adding, “Do you not fear death?” “No,” was the instant and exultant reply, “I shall turn up a *white* man with plenty of money,” proving thereby, very plainly, that, worse than the Greek African—who, it seems, was passive under the treatment he received—he would have stood the scrubbing with the *certainty* of its killing him, in order to become a “white man.”

Now, then, if by both high antiquity and modern authority, it has been shown that Sambo himself is not open to any argument whatever, which prevents his trying every experiment possible, even to that of *death itself*, in order to become a white man, let no one suppose that he is going to stop short of the last possible endeavor in that direction at the present time, no matter how great the disaster it threatens, which promises even an approximation to the condition he so desperately covets.

Besides, when we know that for twenty years past, more or less, certain manipulators, *scrubbers* of Sambo, have, when not engaged with the broom and brush in the manner described, spent their luxurious lives on cushioned chairs, and on the carpeted floors of Congressional halls, merely on the credit of being anxious to perfect *the experiment*, mankind should not expect too much of these unselfish philanthropists, in presuming upon their readiness to give up their vocation, their only chance of comfort, and of accumulating available political capital.

To be sure, another class of men, whose cardinal belief it was that Sambo's skin is the very best skin he could possibly have, because in it he could stand a tropical sun in “cotton-picking,” have unwittingly played into the hands of the *scrubbing* fraternity, Sumner and Co., by giving great provocations to *experiments*; and yet, whatever

experiments are or have been tried, and whoever is benefited, Sambo is *not*; so that, this very moment, his chances of becoming a white man are further off than ever, since, betwixt those who would help him too much, on the one hand, and, on the other, those who are too disgusted and indignant to help him at all, neglect, filth, disease, and kindred troubles are likely to end at last all speculation, leaving the world nothing whatever to quarrel over finally—Æsop's case illustrated anew, exactly.

To be white, in this period of the world's history, and on this continent, means so much, so very much; the accumulated knowledge, the *audacity* (a terrible quality sometimes) and the property of eight or ten generations, running back in American annals at least three centuries; the property comprising so nearly all the land, especially, that the portion in the hands of Sambo is hardly worth consideration. And therefore, when men, carried away by false hopes, reckon that a race lacking all these elements of strength, these guaranties and solid pledges of *power*, are, suddenly, or short of centuries, or indeed *at all*, to mount to the same level, not to say to the *control* of those thus indubitably their superiors by so many tokens of mastery, who, with any discernment whatever, hopes or expects to make these beings white in hardly *any* sense? Who does not feel and know that the position of the negro is undeniably and hopelessly *under*; and that it must remain so, just so long as intellect, wealth, and numbers mean, in governing, more than ignorance, poverty, and numerical inferiority?

Again—for the matter is getting serious as we progress—let the tremendous and ominous fact be noted, that *the majority of no race can be made conspirators against themselves in favor of another and especially of an inferior race*. And, therefore, those politicians, who, like the Chief-Justice and his backers, expect to profit by so unheard of a phenomenon in human affairs, are blind, and deaf, and dumb to human probabilities, and must be disappointed accordingly.

Strange things occur, to be sure, at times, when a purpose is to be served. But, remembering that the time is drawing rapidly near, when the white race, *as a race*, as the dominating millions upon millions, will be heartily tired of being heavily taxed to make up the deficiencies in industry, in calculation, in food and raiment, of the black; and who can then expect miraculous forbearance and patience in dealing with him as an inferior, and more, as a most costly charge, let alone conceding to him any controlling influence over the destinies of the white race, now and always above him?

It is true there are those in the world who appear vastly unhappy

because of their palpable inability to improve upon the work of the Creator; the same kind of people as those described by the old Greek writer, who appear unhappy and utterly dissatisfied because the negro was made *as he is*. And so, in some cases, when satisfied that, in dealing with the badge of inferiority itself—recognized as such since the days of Ham and of Æsop, and his contemporaries—they cannot change it or improve upon it, they, in a captious and monstrous sort of way, become enamored of it or affect to be so insist that the mass of white civilization is in error, and end by hugging Sambo to their hearts.

But would it not be just as rational to arraign the Creator of all for fashioning any other creature of his—for allowing him, or fitting him, to move in an inferior sphere, and yet deny to him every noble attribute? And until these puzzled and indignant philanthropists can reconcile these difficulties, give good reasons why these concessions were not made *in the outset* to the confessedly inferior, by Him who rules and fashions all, men, rational men, will not be in too great haste to adopt their foolish creeds, espouse their quarrels, or condemn their opponents.

We have dwelt at some length on the “killing kindness” of the times, to question its wisdom and condemn it. Let us see what it has done, or is doing—what, at least, are its palpable results.

Not long since, a very remarkable sermon was preached on behalf of the negro, by the present able and kind-hearted Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina; the more remarkable, because it was an appeal to the wealth, and, we may add, the intelligence of New York, from the pulpit of old “St. Paul’s;” it was a cry for “help.” Under his teachings or expositions, in this instance, we say, were gathered the old and “solid” men of the great commercial metropolis; those whose superior enterprise had, through their shipping, visited every mart of civilization and trade, every recess of barbarism almost upon earth. And mark the good bishop’s announcement to them, as he asked them for aid to help to stave off a fearful catastrophe. He said: “*The negro appeared doomed to extinction in this country*”—in other words, white philanthropy, in hastening to make a white man of him, was, in the act of destroying him, a repetition of the sad lesson conveyed by the ancient Greek fabulist precisely.

The bishop stated that in one city alone in North Carolina, where the negroes had flocked in to the number of some ten thousand—that the Freedman’s Bureau (the tub in which poor Sambo is seated for the whitening or scrubbing process) had furnished in a single year “twenty-five hundred coffins” for the dead of these ten thousand;

they having perished in a single year—we repeat—from cold, and scant or bad food, neglect and disease. Think of this, ye Don Quixotes of the philanthropic school, and tell the world, if you can, where this thing is to stop.

The negro—the bishop reminded his audience—was emphatically a social being, particularly fond of gatherings with others of his race ; that a comparatively solitary life on the farm, where he had few resources for pleasure, was his dislike ; and that, acting upon this feeling and incentive, he, under the new order of things, naturally seeks the towns and cities, where he is not wanted, where there is nothing profitable for large bodies of them to do ; and that, unemployed, or partially so, the very natural results followed—poverty, starvation, sickness, *death* !

Now, then, insisting upon the very obvious condition, that of poverty—which must be chronic for generations, because the negro is absolutely cut off from possession of the land in any great quantity, a land where the white race is fixed as monopolists, where nothing short of an impossible revolution, based upon the absurdity of expecting four millions of an inferior race to get on top of thirty millions of the superior—we say that such poverty means, to the end of the chapter, *ignorance* ; and who is eloquent enough, plausible enough, conjurer sufficient, to persuade the white race to abdicate in favor of it ?

And if *not* ; if negro suffrage, legislation, government, can never have the sanction of the masses of the whites, what becomes of the “negro suffrage *party*,” with the designs of its leaders fully comprehended ? Let it be noted, that the white race, hitherto careless in its strength, and conscious of its ultimate security, has looked on at the manipulations of the negro with something akin to utter indifference as to what was going on. But when negro suffrage, and, by consequence or possibility, negro *rule*, as started by Wendell Phillips, is afterwards supplemented in its efforts by the two great guns of the Radical camp, Chase, Grant, or whoever is to be victimized by their proffered alliance and attempted support, the people, the thirty millions of white people are just as sure to extinguish their pretensions in regard to the *whole* country, as they have of late in certain of the Northern States where the case has been put to the test.

In view, then, of the almost inevitable fate of the colored man in the hands of his ostensible “friends,” demonstrated, as we have seen, by facts and imminent probabilities ; knowing, as all must know, that he cannot make progress, or even hold his own in the race marked out for him by them, provoking at every turn prejudices and antipathies which will aggravate the troubles and pile higher the burdens

which keep him under, is it not time for the devotees to the theory of making him white to pause? Forcing him, or encouraging him, to accept this terrible and hopeless competition, appears cruel in the extreme; and yet, if ambition and heartlessness will still insist on making use of the colored man in this way, let them not wonder if the consequences are in the end as blighting to their success as to his own. Because the negro happens to be here; because of his inferiority, degraded unduly on one side, and championed unduly on the other, the white race has already paid so heavily, and still suffers so grievously, that no power on earth can LONG make even philanthropy popular, when overstrained in his behalf. The white people, we say, *both* sides, have suffered terribly on his account; and let those who are now expecting great things of him as an ally in political conflicts, once be thoroughly beaten and disappointed—as beaten and disappointed they *must* be—and who, after this, can expect the costly blunder to be repeated? Who?

THE INEVITABLE.

Let us reduce this question of Negro Suffrage, and by consequence, Negro Government, Negro "Balance of Power," to its simplest conditions—to the INEVITABLE.

Let any one desirous of applying the test, take his position on any street corner, or go into any white assemblage of one of our great cities; and remembering that the proportion of whites to blacks in the nation, is "thirty millions" to "four millions."

Let the investigator of this subject, stop the first thirty white men who may pass; and, placing them in a row, confront them with any four negroes whatever; beginning, for *intelligence*, with Fred. Douglas, and ending with the colored "Boston lawyer" Bradley—would these thirty whites consent to be governed or controlled, *in any way*, by the four blacks?

Go to the farms or workshops of the land; would any thirty farmers or mechanics so consent?

And if not thirty, would *twenty*?

If not twenty, would *ten*?

If not ten, would *five*?

And if no *five* white men in this country, or indeed *on earth*, would consent to have *four* negroes govern or control them, what becomes, *inevitably*, we repeat—of the Negro Suffrage party? Is not its *ultimate* doom written as by the finger of Fate; is it anything whatever but a question of time?

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